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Rotary International of Great Britain and Ireland

Annual Conference - Blackpool - May 4, 1962

It is, I suppose, appropriate to talk of international political affairs to an international group.

If one were to confine one's faculties of observation to the reading of daily newspapers, the plight of the Western World would indeed seem distressing. The complaints of Cassandras ring loudly in all our lands.

An examination of the facts of international life do not justify such pessimism. Many of the victorious allies emerged from the last World War with their economies distorted, their societies disrupted, their productive facilities seemingly shattered beyond repair. Yet so great was the recuperative power of the West that, by the application of human courage, skills and determination, its nations and citizens are, in most instances, more affluent today than ever before in their histories. But a rise in prosperity has not been matched by a similar increase in confidence. The latter has declined, so that often we incline to take counsel of our fears rather than of our advantages.

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The argument is sometimes advanced that the free nations of the West have "lost" a billion people to Communism. This is a resounding statement, but, under analysis, what does it mean? Souls and bodies of others are not our personal property, nor can we lose what we never owned.

It might perhaps be correct to say that Communist dictatorships have gained control over an additional billion people in the last eighteen years.

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Herman and Mary Elena Phleger came to see me this morning. Herman used to be Legal Adviser to the Department of State, lives in San Francisco, and is one of the most famous lawyers in America. Tommy Nichols, Chairman of Olin & Co., followed them. He talked to me about ideas he has on Johns Hopkins University, a paper he intends to present to the President on the reorganization of Government agencies into a single unit to deal with trade problems, political affairs in Maryland, and other matters. He is only 53, but can retire from his company whenever he wishes, having long been its executive head.

Lunched at the American Club in pleasant company.

This afternoon, Bob Roosa, Under Secretary of the Treasury, called on me, as did James Minotto, whom I have known for many years, and who is now consultant to the staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee. I dined tonight at Grosvenor House, with the Wine & Spirits Trades' Benevolent Society. The dinner was a terrific blow-out. There were about 1,000 guests. I sat between two agreeable men, one, A. J. B. Rutherford, and the other, H. M. Gordon Clark. The families of both of them have been engaged in the wine trade for over 150 years. I thought, on the whole, the drinks were rather disappointing, which is natural, in view of the tremendous number of people to be served. The Chateau Gruaud Larose 1955 was certainly not up to snuff. The speeches were numerous. The President, Frenchman Michel Firino Martell, made a good opening discourse. The Chairman of the Committee, John D. P. Stirling, was really brilliant. When I returned home, I found E's dinner guests still in rapt conversation. They were the Achesons, Pam Berry, and John Russell. Dean was in especially towering form.

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Averell Harriman had spoken to me when I was in Washington about his endeavors to have Alan Kirk made Ambassador to Taiwan. I read in the paper

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Perhaps you will forgive me these words, Lord Radcliffe, when I state that before I ever knew you, I had read, as I have continued to do since, every lecture or publication of yours, accessible to me, with keen pleasure and profit.

(Lord Radcliffe).

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